TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE Transcriber's Office

April 13, 1999 LB 505

first, is that right?

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: We're on...we're debating the adoption of the committee amendments.

SENATOR LANDIS: Fine. I ask for the adoption of the committee amendments.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: People have different reasons, Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, for voting on various issues. But as far as the Legislature as a whole, I think its integrity went up in smoke. That's my opinion. I have observed the way lobbyists for the tobacco industry operate around here. know who they are. They might have some that I don't know who slither and slide around and will not be seen. But to stand on the floor, as some have done, and say that, no matter where you raise the price to, people are going to pay it, is crazy. wouldn't accept that anywhere else, because I've heard you too many times say that if you raise this fee here, or that tax there, you're going to price this out of the range of people. the tobacco industry is cracking the whip, because everything reverses. Young people will say whatever they think an adult wants to hear, or, if they don't like the adult, whatever will aggravate that particular adult. So their testimony about how much money they'll spend on cigarettes, if they go to \$10 a package, is just smoke, that's all, just words. This body does not respect the opinions of young people that much on anything. But because it plays into what the tobacco industry wants, all of a sudden they are authorities. for a fact that, if the price of cigarettes is high enough, there are people who are going to stop smoking. If we're going to deal with anecdotes, or those examples we know about, I'm aware of people who've stopped already because of the increases in cigarettes based on the taxes. So to say that it's not going to do anything is not really a valid position. Somebody pointed out that, when there is an increase in tax, how much the tobacco industry will increase its price, or however they said it. shows, if that is true, and I believe it is, the tobacco industry knows that it is dealing with drug addicts. And they know that those addicts, enough of them, are going to find